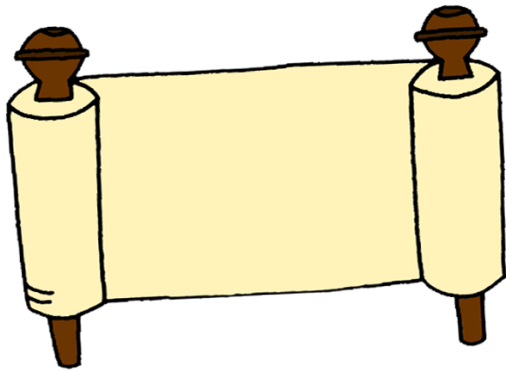


# Jeremiah and the Scroll



Scripture Reference: [Jeremiah 36](#)

**Suggested Emphasis:** Repent when we are wrong.



Background Study



Story Introduction



Telling the Story



Review Questions



Songs



Learning Activities



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## Story Overview:

Jeremiah continued to warn the people of Judah that their nation would be destroyed if they did not repent (say they were sorry and change their ways) and follow God. The Lord commanded Jeremiah to write these warnings on a scroll and read it to the people. Jeremiah dictated the words to his secretary, Baruch, and then told him to go to the temple and read it to the people. Eventually, the scroll was read to King Jehoiakim. He did not want to repent so he cut the scroll into pieces and threw the pieces into a fire. He wanted Baruch and Jeremiah arrested but the Lord kept them safely hidden. Jeremiah and Baruch wrote the scroll again and began preaching that the nation of Judah would be destroyed because the king and the people did not repent.

## Background Study:

The year was 605/4 BC. Jehoiakim was still the ruler of Judah. The King of Egypt had appointed him and he did not obey God. Although he ruled eleven years, he was a puppet king to Egypt. He did what the king of Egypt wanted him to do.

The end of Judah was imminent. Already, the king of Babylon was attacking and carrying off captives. Daniel (next week's story) was one of the early captives taken off to Babylon. That probably happened not long before this week's story. It was almost twenty years later when Jerusalem finally completely fell to the Babylonians.

[Background Information on the Divided Kingdom.](#)

Judah was in terrible shape. King Jehoiakim did not respect or worship God. He resented the prophet Jeremiah

always telling him he was wrong. Jeremiah continued to declare the word of the Lord but he avoided the king and his officials for the sake of his own safety.

When this message from the Lord came to Jeremiah he knew he would have to be careful in presenting it to the people. He could not preach it openly or he would be arrested. The wisdom of the Lord is shown in commanding that his word be recorded on a scroll. The scroll could be read and copied even when Jeremiah himself could not be present. Considering the future fall of Jerusalem and the migration of the Jews, the written word was a sure way to keep the message alive.

Before the invention of books, both the Old Testament and New Testament writings were copied on scrolls, which were sheets of papyrus or leather glued end to end and rolled up on rods. The Old Testament writings were probably originally written on and copied on leather scrolls. The New Testament writings were written and copied on papyrus scrolls. Papyrus scrolls, which had been manufactured in Egypt since 3000 BC, were made from the papyrus reed, which grew readily along the Nile. Two layers of these strips, one in horizontal rows and one in vertical rows, were laid atop one another and bonded together to form thick, rough sheets of paper.

The language used in the scroll would have been Hebrew. The Hebrew alphabet had 22 letters. Text was written from right to left. Originally, all of the letters were consonants so it is almost impossible to determine the original pronunciation of Hebrew words.

There are some Hebrew words which have come to be used in modern English language. Two examples are "myrrh" and "jubilee".



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[Next Lesson](#)



[List of all lessons on this website](#)

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## Way to Introduce the Story:

Make a scroll by rolling up a long piece of paper. Write the scripture reference "Jeremiah 36:2" on the scroll. Let the children look up the Scripture and read it out loud. Talk about what a scroll is and how that people in Old Testament times did not have books. Books as we know them were not yet invented.

Another fun thing you could do is to use bible concordances to look up Hebrew letters. Then write the Hebrew letters on the scroll and let the children guess what they are. A simple word to write would be "Shalom" which is the Hebrew word for peace.

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## The Story:

God's promised his people that he would always take care of them. All the people had to do was to follow and worship God and try their best to obey him. If they did this then God promised to never let the enemies win over them and hurt them. God's people used to be divided into two kingdoms. They had two names - Israel and Judah. The kingdom of Israel did not obey God. They worshiped idols and treated each other badly. Enemies came and destroyed the kingdom of Israel.

The other kingdom, Judah, had many kings over the years. Some were good kings who worshiped God; others were not good and worshiped idols. When the people of Israel again forgot God and served idols, God sent the prophet Jeremiah to them. God told Jeremiah, "Take a scroll and write on it all the words I have spoken to you."

So Jeremiah asked his helper, Baruch, to help him. Jeremiah would say the words from God and Baruch would write them down on a scroll. Soon the scroll was filled with messages from God. The message the Lord gave Jeremiah was that if the people did not stop worshiping idols, the big city of Jerusalem would be broken down and the beautiful temple and houses would be burned.

The king and many other people were already angry with Jeremiah. They did not like it when Jeremiah told them that they needed to repent of their sins. To repent meant that they would have to say they were sorry for what they had done wrong. They had to say they were wrong in following idols and not God. But that was not all! Repenting is not just saying you are sorry for the bad thing you have done. Repenting means that you have to stop doing the bad thing and then try to do good things. They needed to start follow God and do what God wanted them to do.

Since so many people were angry with Jeremiah, he knew that they might not listen to him. So Jeremiah asked Baruch to take the scroll to the temple where there were crowds of people gathered. Baruch was to read the words of the scroll to all of the people.

When all of the people were gathered at the temple, Baruch read the message of the Lord to them. While the people were listening, some of King Jehoiakim's officials also heard the message. They knew that King Jehoiakim would not like the message. King Jehoiakim liked to worship idols and to disobey God. He would not want to say he was sorry for the bad things he had done. He would not want to change and do good things. The officials knew that the King would not want to hear a message from God about repenting.

Some of King Jehoiakim's officials invited Baruch to come and read the message on the scroll to them. After they heard the message they asked Baruch where he got the message. "I got it from the prophet of Jeremiah, of course."

The king's officials knew that they had to take the scroll to the king and they knew that the king would be angry. Before they took the scroll they told Baruch to get Jeremiah so both of them could go and hide.

Then the officials took the scroll away from Baruch and told the king about it. The king sent someone to go and get the scroll and read it out loud. The king grew very angry when he heard God's message. He did not like it when the message said that he should repent.

Then the king noticed the fire. Because it was winter there was a big fire burning to keep everyone warm. Now, whenever a few lines of the message were read the king would use a scribe's knife and cut off that part of the scroll. Then, when a little more was read, he would cut that part off and throw it in the fire. Soon the whole scroll was burned up! The king did not respect the word of the Lord!

The king sent men to arrest Jeremiah and Baruch but no one could find them. They were safely hidden. Soon another message came to Jeremiah from the Lord. Again, Jeremiah said the words out loud and Baruch wrote them down. This time on a brand new scroll. The new scroll contained all of the words that the old one did and it also had a special message for King Jehoiakim. Bad things would happen to the king because he did not obey the words of the Lord and repent of his sins.

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## Review Questions:

1. Which prophet said the message of God out loud while his helper wrote it in a scroll? Jeremiah
2. What does repent mean? To say you are sorry for what you have done wrong and then to stop doing it.
3. What did King Jehoiakim do with the scroll when his servant read from it? He tore off pieces and threw

them in the fire.

4. After the King burned the scroll, what did Jeremiah do? He wrote another one.

## Song Suggestions:

- [Cast Your Burdens](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

## Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

*Activities:*

- Practice writing Hebrew letters.
- Older children can look up “repent” in the bible concordance or in a bible encyclopaedia.
- Younger children can act out situations where they need to repent. They will most understand the concept of saying they are sorry. Use tape to “draw” two large faces on the floor. One can be a happy face and one a sad face. Describe a situation to the children (pushing younger brother, for example). Now give them two different endings – one where the child says they are sorry but then pushes the brother again and another ending where they say they are sorry and then stop pushing and try to help the brother. Each time you tell an ending the children should stand on the appropriate face on the floor. Happy face if the child repents and sad face if the child does not repent. Use a number of descriptive situations. This game will bring home the idea that saying “sorry” is not enough.
- Show younger (and maybe some older) children the proper way to take care of a bible: Turn pages correctly. Do not “crack” the spine. Do not turn down pages. So not stick lots of papers between the pages. Write neat notes in the margins but do not colour in it. Keep it in a safe place.

*Crafts:*

- [Make a scroll. Click here for instructions.](#) Write out Jeremiah 36:2 on the scroll.
- Make a poster that looks like a “U-turn” road sign. Cut pictures from magazines depicting sins and glue those at the bottom of the “U”. Then write the scripture Acts 3:19 at the arrow end of the “U” to depict turning away from sin.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for “Jeremiah and the Scroll” printables to print on A4 size paper](#)  
[Click here for “Jeremiah and the Scroll” printables \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

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## Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Chart: Chronology of the Prophets after the Fall of Samaria \(Israel\) in 722 B.C. - Part 1 at](http://www.biblecharts.org/)
- [Chart: Chronology of the Prophets after Fall of Samaria \(Israel\) in 722 B.C.-Part 2 at](http://www.biblecharts.org/)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/the-prophets/>

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